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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 CIAE-00
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R 231517Z DEC 76
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2446
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN

S E C R E T MOSCOW 20056

TEL AVIV ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR EG IS UR JO PLO
SUBJECT: VISIT OF IRISH FONMIN: GROMYKO ON MIDDLE EAST

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: SEPTEL REPORTS OTHER SUBJECTS DISCUSSED DURING BUSINESS PORTION (DEC 15-16) OF IRISH FONMIN FITZGERALD'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO USSR. ON MIDDLE EAST, GROMYKO SUGGESTED FEDERATED PALESTINIAN STATE BUT IMPLIED SOVIETS WOULD NOT PUSH FOR IT OVER PALESTINIAN OBJECTIONS. HE EXPRESSED SOME ANNOYANCE AT INABILITY OF PALESTINIANS TO DECIDE ISSUES WHICH HE THOUGHT SHOULD BE DECIDED, AND HE THOUGHT POSSIBLE SOLUTION FOR PROBLEM OF GETTING BOTH SIDES TO RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER MAY BE "SIMULTANEOUS ACT". END SUMMARY.
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2. MIDDLE EAST TOOK MAJOR PART OF DEC 16 MEETING OF ALMOST THREE HOURS BETWEEN FITZGERALD AND GROMYKO, ACCORDING TO IRISH EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY O'CEALLAIGH. GROMYKO APPEARED TO BE IN RELAXED MOOD AND TALKED FREELY AND AT LENGTH ABOUT SITUATION. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS

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FOR PROGRESS, AND EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT. IRISH FELT IT WAS MOST REVEALING PART OF TOUR D'HORIZON. ACCORDING TO O'CEALLAIGH, FOLLOWING WERE MAIN POINTS GROMYKO MADE:

3. TERRITORIAL ARRANGEMENTS: GROMYKO STRESSED THAT "SOME KIND OF SEPARATE, INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE" MUST BE PART OF ANY SETTLEMENT. HE SUGGESTED THAT ONE FORM COULD BE FEDERATION OF WEST BANK, GAZA AND JORDAN. SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE GUARANTEES, HE NOTED, AND SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO GUARANTEE EXISTENCE OF ALL STATES IN AREA, INCLUDING ISRAEL, AS PART OF SETTLEMENT. (ENGAGING IN BIT OF DISINGENUOUS COMMENTARY, GROMYKO NOTED THAT SOVIET UNION MADE PROPOSAL FOR SEPARATE JEWISH STATE AS FAR BACK AS 1946-47.) HE REMARKED THAT "AS FAR AS I KNOW" IDEA OF FEDERATION IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO PALESTINIANS, AND THAT "IT IS THEIR RIGHT TO TAKE A DECISION ON MATTER", THUS IMPLYING THAT SOVIETS WOULD NOT PUSH FEDERATION IDEA AGAINST PALESTINIAN OPPOSITION. GROMYKO SAW SERIOUS PROBLEM IN GETTING PALESTINIANS AND ISRAELIS TO RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER OFFICIALLY. NONETHELESS, HE FELT, IN THE END IT MAY TURN OUT TO BE SIMPLY ISSUE OF PRESTIGE. IN THAT CASE, HE SAW POSSIBILITY OF SOLVING IT BY "SIMULTANEOUS ACT" OF RECOGNITION BY EACH SIDE.

4. PALESTINIAN DECISIONS: GROMYKO SHOWED ANNOYANCE THAT PALESTINIANS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO DECIDE ISSUES WHICH HE SEEMED TO THINK REQUIRED DECISION. IN JANUARY, HE "HOPED", PALESTINIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL WOULD MEET AND WOULD DECIDE ON CREATION OF "INTERIM GOVERNMENT" AND ON EXTENT OF THEIR TERRITORIAL CLAIMS. HE DID NOT KNOW IF THEY WOULD, IN

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FACT, TAKE THE DECISIONS. "IF THEY DO NOT HAVE DEFINITE VIEWS ON HOW TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS, THEY WILL," HE SAID, "HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THEIR FRIENDS, NOT JUST THE SOVIET UNION," BECAUSE THESE FRIENDS "CANNOT BE DEFENDING MORE THAN PALESTINIANS WANT." GROMYKO ASSURED HIS INTERLOCUTORS THAT SOVIETS HAVE TOLD PALESTINIANS THIS.

5. GENEVA CONFERENCE: GROMYKO TOLD IRISH HE HAD RECENTLY PROPOSED RECONVENING GENEVA CONFERENCE TO PRESIDENT FORD BUT NOTED THAT, WITH POLITICAL SITUATION IN U.S. IN TRANSITION, HE COULD NOT SAY WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO SOVIET PROPOSAL. HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER NEW CARTER ADMINISTRATION WOULD TAKE UP SUGGESTION. ON RECONVENING, HE SAID SOVIETS HAVE DISCUSSED MATTER WITH EGYPTIANS AND THEY HAVEAGREED THAT TIME MAY BE RIPE. SOVIETS HAVE NOT TALKED DIRECTLY TO SYRIANS ABOUT THIS SINCE LEBANON SITUATION AROSE, BUT THEY HAVE IMPRESSION SYRIANS WOULD NOT OPPOSE CONVOCATION. (WE NOTE STATEMENT MADE BEFORE RESULTS OF SADAT-ASAD

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MEETING WERE IN.) AS FOR JORDAN, GROMYKO SAID, "THE U.S. DETERMINES THEIR POSITION." GROMYKO REPEATED SOVIET POSITION THAT PALESTINIANS MUST PARTICIPATE IN GENEVA CONFERENCE ON BASIS OF EQUALITY WITH ALL OTHER PARTICIPANTS "FROM THE OUTSET".
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